

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 02, 2001 12:57
To: 'mike.buckley@fema.gov', 'doug bellomo@fema.gov'
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Congaree floodway - Citizen Appeal

January 2, 2001

Mr. Michael K. Buckley, P.E.
Mr. Doug Bellomo, P.E.
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20472

Regarding: Flood Insurance Maps (FIRMs) for Richland and Lexington
Counties and incorporated areas, South Carolina - Citizen Appeals

Dear Mr. Buckley and Mr. Bellomo:

When FEMA allowed Burroughs and Chapin intervenor status, FEMA also announced that it would accept additional information until January 2, 2001. We are submitting this letter in response to that opportunity.

It has come to our attention that consideration of the Congaree Floodway by FEMA and others has not extended to existing neighborhoods along the Gills Creek, Congaree Creek and Six-Mile Creek and other affected watersheds which are already subject to flooding. These neighborhoods are: Forest Lake, Lake Katherine, Gills Creek, Bluff Estates and others along Bluff Road - Arthurtown, Atlas Road, and Eastway Park. It is our understanding that the hydrology in the Congaree Floodway revision is out of date regarding these areas even though tributary data for these neighborhoods was included in FEMA's final evaluation. If our understandings are correct, all of this information should be updated and made available for review prior to the making of development decisions which would adversely affect these important areas.

The developer's levee consultant, [REDACTED], has described a Congaree levee system (at a Richland County Council seminar) which would be reconstructed by the developers as an integrated levee system worthy of withstanding a 500-year flood; the \$5 to \$10-million dollar levee upgrade promoted by the developers does not appear to meet even a similar standard as an integrated levee system. Future communications between FEMA and the developers should make the design plan and developers' commitments clear if this project is to receive further attention from FEMA.

Our concern is that the levee system proposed by the developers may protect their new development under certain circumstances, but the proposed levee system will consistently aggravate flooding problems already experienced by long-standing Columbia neighborhoods during only 10- to 20-year flood events. In addition to these neighborhoods, the Congaree Swamp National Monument would clearly be affected if the agricultural levees are upgraded.

In carefully chosen words, [REDACTED] continues to characterize the improvements to Lake Murray Dam over the last 50 years as a basis for increased allowable operation and lake elevation, and also continues to imply that the safety-related designed flood event maximum lake level can be used to protect the proposed floodplain development. Neither of these two insinuations is correct.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]